

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



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2012 Yukon River Summer Salmon Fishery News Release #24 **Summer Announcement #20, District 1 Commercial Fishing Period #2** Districts Affected: Lower Yukon Area

The Chinook salmon run continues to track considerably below historical averages. The Pilot Station sonar cumulative passage estimate of approximately 74,000 Chinook salmon through June 30 is well below the historical average of 114,600 for this date, and is also below the average passage estimates at this point for late run years, of approximately 95,800. Conversely, the Pilot Station sonar summer chum salmon passage estimate through June 30 is approximately 1,272,000 fish which is above the median of 871,000 at this date.

Based on the current assessment information, additional measures are being implemented to protect Chinook salmon. The next subsistence salmon fishing period in the northern portion of the Coastal District and District 1 is being reduced from a 36-hour subsistence salmon fishing period to a 12-hour subsistence fishing period to conserve Chinook salmon while providing some opportunity for subsistence fishermen to target summer chum salmon.

Coastal District: In the northern portion of the Coastal District from 62 degrees North latitude to Point Romanof, subsistence salmon fishing is currently closed. The northern portion of the Coastal District will reopen at 8:00 p.m. Sunday, July 1, for 12-hour subsistence salmon fishing period. Subsistence salmon fishing in the northern portion of the Coastal District will be open from 8:00 p.m. Sunday, July 1, until 8:00 a.m. Monday, July 2. Additionally, gillnets are restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size in the northern portion of the Coastal District to conserve Chinook salmon while allowing fishermen the opportunity to harvest summer chum salmon. The department will notify fishermen by July 3, concerning subsistence salmon fishing opportunity in the northern portion of the Coastal District.

In the southern portion of the Coastal District, from the Naskonat Peninsula north to 62° North latitude, the subsistence salmon fishing schedule is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day. Gillnets are restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size in the southern portion of the Coastal

District to conserve Chinook salmon while allowing fishermen the opportunity to harvest summer chum salmon.

District 1: Subsistence salmon fishing in District 1 is closed. District 1 will reopen at 8:00 p.m. Sunday, July 1. This will be a 12-hour subsistence salmon fishing period, from 8:00 p.m. Sunday, July 1, until 8:00 a.m. Monday, July 2. Gillnets are restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size to conserve Chinook salmon while allowing fishermen the opportunity to harvest summer chum salmon. The department will notify fishermen by July 3 concerning the next subsistence salmon fishing period and schedule for District 1.

Fishermen are reminded that all subsistence caught Chinook salmon must have both tips of the tail fin removed prior to concealing or removing the fish from the fishing grounds from June 1 to July 15.

Fishermen in District 1 should stand by for short notice news releases on VHF and radio regarding changes to the subsistence salmon fishing schedules or commercial fishing periods in this district.

Based on the current abundance of summer chum salmon, this announcement opens one commercial salmon fishing period in District 1 that will proceed concurrent with the open subsistence salmon fishing period in the same district. Based on current assessment information, the area open to commercial fishing is being limited to only a portion of District 1 in which the incidental harvest rate of Chinook salmon is anticipated to be low.

District 1 Commercial (South Mouth Only): Commercial salmon fishing in District 1 will be from 8:00 p.m. Sunday, July 1, until 12:00 Midnight Sunday, July 1. This will be a 4-hour commercial fishing period with gillnets restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size to target summer chum salmon. This commercial fishing period will coincide with the first 4 hours of the next District 1 subsistence salmon fishing period.

Only a portion of District 1 will be open to commercial fishing. The area open to commercial fishing within District 1 will be the South Mouth down river of the lower point of Head of Passes to Chris Point, both locations identified by ADF&G regulatory markers. The area open to commercial fishing includes Black River, Kwiguk Pass, and coastal waters from Chris Point to one mile north of Kwiguk Pass. Middle and North Mouth and passes such as Aproka, north of the mainstem South Mouth are closed to commercial fishing. No Chinook salmon can be sold in any summer chum commercial openings when subsistence fishing has been restricted. Therefore, fishermen can release live Chinook salmon or use them for subsistence purposes. Chinook salmon caught but not sold must be reported on fish tickets.

Recorded fishery announcements and updates will be available 24 hours a day at 949-1731 or 1-866-479-7387. If you have any questions regarding this report, please call the Emmonak ADF&G office at 949-1320. The Emmonak ADF&G office will stand by on VHF channel 7A.

This has been an announcement by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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